

Review of: "Exploring Perceptions on Sexual Empowerment Among Heterosexual Black Women in Braamfontein, Johannesburg"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Title: Exploring Perceptions of Sexual Empowerment among Heterosexual Black Women in South Africa

Peer Review:

This article provides a comprehensive and valuable exploration of sexual empowerment among heterosexual black women in South Africa. The authors have successfully addressed a significant gap in scholarship, emphasizing the importance of understanding women's perceptions of sexual empowerment within the context of a culture that often perpetuates gender inequalities and sexual oppression.

Positive Aspects:

- 1. Thematic Clarity and Alignment:** The article maintains a clear thematic focus on sexual empowerment, covering various dimensions such as sexual communication, consent, self-efficacy, experimenting with sexual activities, and self-pleasure. This thematic alignment provides a structured and comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.
- 2. Robust Methodology:** The qualitative approach, specifically the case study design, is well-justified and appropriate for exploring the perceptions of sexual empowerment among the target population. The use of in-depth interviews with a purposive sampling method enhances the richness of the data collected, allowing for a nuanced exploration of the participants' experiences.
- 3. Ethical Considerations:** The authors demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical research practices. Obtaining informed consent, ensuring participant confidentiality, and obtaining ethical approval from the university's Human Research Ethics Committee are all commendable ethical considerations that enhance the credibility and integrity of the study.
- 4. Significance and Contribution to Literature:** The authors effectively articulate the significance of their study, emphasizing its contribution to the existing literature on sexual empowerment in South Africa. By highlighting the lack of research in this specific context and the multidimensional nature of sexual empowerment, the article serves as a valuable resource for scholars and practitioners interested in women's health and empowerment.
- 5. Rigorous Data Analysis:** Thematic content analysis is employed skillfully to analyze the qualitative data, providing a

clear and structured presentation of the findings. The incorporation of participant quotes strengthens the credibility of the results and ensures that the voices of the participants are well-represented.

6. Practical Implications and Policy Recommendations: The study goes beyond theoretical exploration by offering practical implications for social workers and public health policymakers. The authors connect their findings to the potential improvement of sexual healthcare for women in South Africa, showcasing the real-world applications of their research.

7. Cultural Sensitivity: The article appropriately addresses the cultural context of South Africa, acknowledging the influence of cultural norms and religious beliefs on perceptions of sexual empowerment. This cultural sensitivity adds depth to the study and enhances its relevance to the local context.

Areas for Consideration:

1. Generalization Limitation: While the study provides valuable insights into the perceptions of sexual empowerment among heterosexual black women in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, it is essential to acknowledge the potential limitations in generalizing these findings to broader populations. The authors could consider discussing the external validity of their study and potential variations across diverse cultural and geographical contexts.

2. Reflexivity and Positionality: The article could benefit from a brief reflection on the researchers' reflexivity and positionality. Acknowledging the potential influence of the researchers' backgrounds on the study could enhance transparency and provide readers with a deeper understanding of the research process.

3. Future Research Directions: To further enrich the discussion, the authors might consider including a section on potential avenues for future research. Identifying gaps in the current study and suggesting areas for further exploration would contribute to the ongoing discourse on sexual empowerment.

In summary, this article makes a significant contribution to the field of sexual empowerment research. Its well-structured methodology, ethical considerations, and clear thematic focus strengthen the credibility of the study. The findings offer valuable insights for both academia and practitioners, and the article represents a commendable effort in addressing an under-researched and crucial topic.